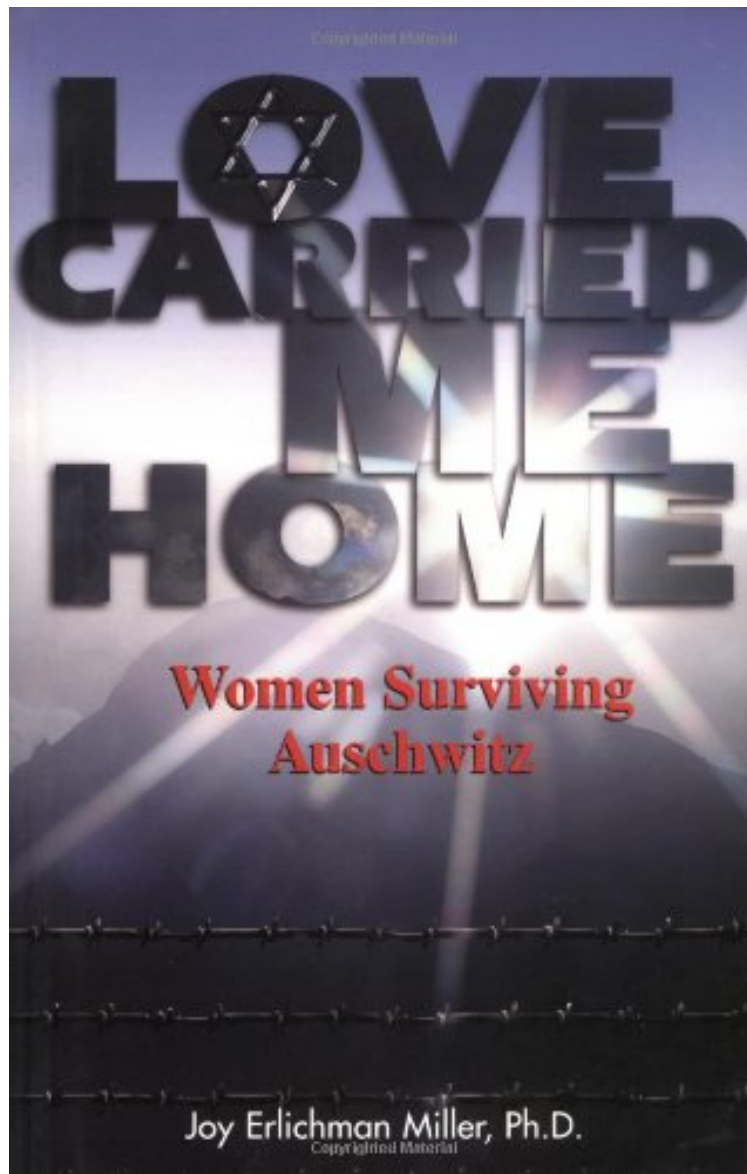


(Get free) Love Carried Me Home: Women Surviving Auschwitz

## Love Carried Me Home: Women Surviving Auschwitz

Joy Miller

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Love Carried Me Home: Women Surviving Auschwitz: Purchased at .comBy depLove Carried Me Home is the story of 16 women sent to Auschwitz and how they survived. A very interesting book by Joy Erlichman Miller, Ph. D. who interviewed and studied how these women managed to survive

the most infamous camp of all. I found the stories very interesting, by coincidence I had already read two books written by the 16th survivor in the book, Helen W. a few years ago. I was already familiar with much of the research in this book, the stories of the women, though, are real stories of survival in the face of incredible odds. A really good read. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. LOVED IT! By R. Petrunal rate every testimony five stars. Book is excellent and academic in flavour. This book should be on a college reading list. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Will read again and again By annie laurie A wonderful book on a sad topic but will read again, these women were truly heroic

A powerful, poignant examination of sixteen women's triumphant struggles to survive the Auschwitz Concentration Camp during the Holocaust. Bearing witness to atrocities of genocide during the darkest moment in history, female survivors teach us the importance of emotional bonding and affiliation in their own personal survival, suggesting that love and human connection was the dominant force in their resiliency. Facing similar but not identical circumstances, the "voice" of female Holocaust survivors has been silenced by male counterparts. *Love Carried Me Home* is based on a two-year research study exploring the coping strategies of women from Auschwitz who gave their testimonies to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at its inception. All proceeds from this book are being donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to specifically assist in attaining new oral histories and testimonies.

About the Author Joy Erlichman Miller, Ph.D. is an internationally known licensed psychotherapist, professional trainer and author. She is an Illinois state Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor as well as a Certified Master Addictions Counselor. Additionally, Dr. Miller is a part-time instructor at Bradley University teaching in the Graduate ELH program. Dr. Miller is a frequent expert on national television and has appeared on the Sally Jessy Raphael, Oprah, Jenny Jones, Montel Williams and Geraldo Rivera shows. Her works have been featured in various national magazines and over 30 newspapers around the country. She has hosted her own radio show for five years on a CBS affiliate and currently presents a mental health segment on the local CBS television station. In 1996, Dr. Miller was presented with the Harold Hodgkinson Dissertation Award for her doctoral dissertation entitled *The Coping Strategies and Adaptation Mechanisms Utilized by Female Holocaust Survivors from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp*. Her published books include: *Following the Yellow Brick Road: The Adult Child's Personal Journey Through Oz*, *My Holding You Up is Holding Me Back: Over-Responsibility and Shame*, *Celebrations for Your Inner Child*, and *Addictive Relationships: Reclaiming Your Boundaries*. Please visit Dr. Miller online at [www.joymiller.com](http://www.joymiller.com). Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

from the Introduction

The Voices of Women For decades, the unique experiences and coping strategies of female Holocaust survivors were ignored. The voices of survivors were encapsulated into one voice, which was predominantly male. Thus, women's means of coping and adapting in the twentieth century to the genocidal atrocities of the Holocaust were ignored by males who generalized the experiences of all who bore witness. However, survivors, researchers and historians such as Charlotte Delbo (1992, 1993), Marlene Heinemann (1986), Isabella Leitner (1985, 1994), Joan Ringelheim (1984, 1985, 1993), Carol Rittner (1993), Nechama Tec (1986) and Bonnie Gurewitsch (1998) have discussed the Shoah from a different perspective, which focuses on the feelings, coping strategies and traumas that express the "invisible female voice." Sadly, many female Holocaust researchers and survivors have been severely criticized for their gender-related conclusions. Many female survivors and scholars have suggested the importance of relational bonding as an essential coping strategy for female Holocaust survivors. The opposition has argued that gender-specific focusing has the potential to denigrate the Holocaust, reducing it to sexism and detracting from the experiences of the survivors. Opponents believe that those perpetrating the genocide and atrocities of the Third Reich counted Jews as Jews, not as men, women or children. Viktor Frankl, one of the most noted Holocaust survivors, states (1984, 1988) that survivors of the Holocaust identified with a "meaning or will to survive" as a means of coping. Gender-based researcher Sondra Rappaport's (1991) work on the coping strategies and methods of adaptation used by Holocaust survivors suggests that women used different forms of coping techniques to develop "meaning" needed for survival. Her work reveals that women tended to cope by bonding emotionally to others, while men coped by focusing on tasks. Deborah Belle (cited in Alan Monat and Richard S. Lazarus 1991) agrees that women value relationships and define themselves in terms of their relationships, and that involvement in supportive human relationships protects stressed individuals from physical and mental-health concerns. Generally, women seek support more readily than males during times of stress. For instance, in chapter 10 you will read about Guta W., who beseeched not only a German woman guard for help to save her mother, but Eichmann himself. Guta knew no fear in her attempts to save her mother. Women also have shown a propensity to seek out more formal and informal sources of support and affiliation than males during stress. Another gender-specific difference relates to the loss of loved ones. At such times, women Holocaust survivors appear to have been less vulnerable than male counterparts due to the support and encouragement they received from fellow prisoners. The assistance of other women helped maintain women's emotional strength and resiliency. The bonds created with others helped women cope with the dehumanizing acts of the Nazi regime. Female survivors' narratives bear witness to their own personal interpretations of "meaning" and moral choices, but women's decisions are clearly

based on meaning, which includes a dimension of concern and caring for others whom they value. The personal stories within this book make it clear that establishing and creating binding relationships was a critical factor for many survivors. Reestablishing a new community or family by bonding with other women assisted the surviving prisoners in creating a reason to live (see appendix A, "The Findings"). It is important to note, however, that nearly all Auschwitz victims knew that their survival had something to do with an element of luck or chance. Many believe that luck had more to do with their survival than anything within their own control. Despite the massive numbers of females murdered, surviving Jewish women continue to bear witness and celebrate their ability to survive. Through oral histories, narratives and autobiographies, their personal stories celebrate the "meaning" that kept them ever striving to survive despite insurmountable odds. Following a brief description of Auschwitz on the following pages, the stories in this book bear witness to the resiliency of sixteen female survivors. Whether due to luck, technical skills, non-Jewish appearance, a hope of reunion, faith, humor, personal resistance, or the assistance of or through a relationship with another, these women survived, holding on valiantly to the will to live! .A Survivor A survivor wears nice clothes with a matching smile, trying to recapture the forgotten pleasures of life, but is unable fully to enjoy anything. A survivor will go on vacation and, while watching a show, will picture her mother, holding her grandson in her arms, gasping for breath. A survivor will read about a fire and desperately hope that her brother had died from the fumes before the flames reached him. A survivor will think of her sister with her three dead children and inhale the gas to feel the gasping agony of their deaths. A survivor will go to a party and feel alone. A survivor appears quiet but is screaming within. A survivor will make large weddings, with many guests, but the ones she wants most will never arrive. A survivor will go to a funeral and cry, not for the deceased but for the ones that were never buried. A survivor will reach out to you but not let you get close, for you remind her of what she could have been, but will never be. A survivor is at ease only with other survivors. A survivor is broken in spirit, but pretends to be like you. A survivor is a wife, mother, friend, neighbor, yet nobody really knows her. A survivor is a restless tortured person; she can only enjoy her children. Yet it is not easy to be the children of a survivor, for she expects the impossible of them to be constantly happy, to do and learn all the things denied to her. A survivor will awaken in a sweat from her nightmares, unable to sleep again. In vain does she chase the ghosts from her bedside, but they remain her guests for the remainder of the night. A survivor has no fear of death, for peace is its reward. Cecilie Klein, Sentenced to Live